

Remarks/Arguments

The November 17, 2005 Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (37 CFR 1.121) stated that the remaining claims were not readable on the elected invention. The Notice stated that the canceled claims were drawn to a hydraulic system with first and second motors connected in series by first and second single pilot operated valves, respectively, and the new claims were drawn to a mower system with a plurality of pilot valves controlled by a position of a respective one of a plurality of mower decks.

In this reply, Applicant amends claims 8-9 and 12-13, and cancels claims 5-7 and 10-11. Amended claims 8-9 and 12-13 are directed to the elected invention for the following reasons.

Amended claims 8-9 are directed to a hydraulic system connecting first, second and third hydraulic motors in series, and first and second solenoid-operated directional control valves. Amended claims 12-13 are directed to a hydraulic system to provide hydraulic flow to a plurality of hydraulic motors with a plurality of solenoid-operated control valves and a plurality of pilot operated control valves.

Amended claim 8 is patentable over Peterson and Hunck et al. Peterson does not show any solenoid-operated directional control valves. Instead, Peterson relates to a mounting arrangement for bulldozer blades having control valves 53-57 which are three position valves permitting selective extension or retraction of the respective hydraulic motors to align the bulldozer blade. See Peterson at column 3, lines 24-27. Hunck et al relates to a hydrostatic front wheel drive system for a tractor, with first and second supply passages connected to reverse and forward pilot passages, and that can be connected in series for low torque operation or in parallel when high torque at the wheels is required.

Amended claim 9 is patentable over Peterson and Hunck et al for at least the same reasons as base claim 8.

Amended claim 12 is patentable over Peterson and Hunck et al. Peterson does not show any solenoid-operated control valves, and does not show any pilot operated control valves. Hunck et al's reverse and forward solenoids are not each associated with a hydraulic motor. Hunck et al does not use a pilot operated control valve to open hydraulic flow to one of the hydraulic motors, but instead feeds both the first and second fluid motors 130 and 132 in either series or parallel, depending

on required torque. Thus, Hunck et al fails to show solenoid-operated control valves that open hydraulic flow to a selected hydraulic motor.

Amended claim 13 is patentable over Peterson and Hunck et al for at least the same reasons as base claim 12. Additionally, neither Peterson nor Hunck et al show a hydraulic motor that is not associated with a solenoid-operated control valve.

In conclusion, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully,



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